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paying teachers more money, then if the state puts in the money, the state should call the shots, and the state should mandate testing of teachers as well as students to make sure that we're getting value for the state dollars being asked to be funnelled into these schools. Now, back to this program that I'm trying to strike from the budget. It's called Attracting Excellence to Teaching. I don't know why they use the term "excellence" rather than "excellent teachers," "excellent candidates." We aren't...we're not even describing this program in terms of individuals, but rather a concept. And I don't think necessarily making \$2,500 a year available is going to bring excellence or excellent candidates into the schools.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: But be that as it may, the program is recommended by the Appropriations Committee for funding this year. To my understanding, the Governor did not put that in his budget. I'll have the opportunity to explore that more as time goes by. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Members, the muffins being passed out are for Senator Bruning's birthday today. Please join in wishing Senator Bruning a happy birthday. Further debate on the Chambers amendment, Senator Thompson, followed by Senators Raikes and Chambers.

SENATOR THOMPSON: Mr. Lieutenant Governor, members of the body, just to give you a little history on how we got here and put this in context, the bill that Senator Chambers is referring to is law. This is a piece of legislation that passed last session. It was funded by the Legislature. It was vetoed by the Governor. And the Governor this year, just to answer Senator Chambers' question, supports funding it in the second year of the budget. The Appropriations Committee has put funding in for both years of the budget. The idea for this program came from a process that the Legislature and the State Board of Education were engaged in. Senator Bohlke and I served on the State Board of Education's 3-R Task Force. And what that task force was looking at was the recruitment, renewal, and retention of teachers. It didn't get into the salary issue